

My dearest Mother

San Francisco June 19th 1849

Why have you not written to me Jim received ~~one~~ from
Parrish which I read but it was not like one of my own I
wrote 2 letters from Panama one to you one to Bill do do do do write
we left Panama on 18th March on board the Barge Equator an
old larry dirty Ciley whale ship of 260 tons burthen carried 139 pas-
sengers 19 Sailors and 7 Hogs which had the range of the decks
both passengers and Hogs about the only difference between us
was that we eat first and were allowed to go between
decks to sleep the Hogs slept on deck our sleeping room
was 3 1/2 ft high each one allowed a place 18ⁱⁿ wide by 3^{ft} 8ⁱⁿ
long we were divided into messes of 10 got our grub in an old
dirty bidden consisting of salt Junk and bread every day and either
rice, beans, (not white ones) or yams. all the provisions had been aboard
the ship 18 months they went hard at first I will give you a
sketch of our voyage March 19 tea for supper sweetened with the
worst molasses I ever saw it was as thin and quite as black as
Ink and tasted more like vinegar than molasses our bread full of
weavel and worms cockroaches in millions not like the little black
kind you have but as large as Hummingbirds fly like Grapshoppers
20. saw the water red as blood for miles some said it was an
insect the sperm whales live on others that a kind of fish made
It slept on deck as it was so hot and close below 21. one of the
sailors caught a Booby they will sit on the mast till taken off
by the hand are a species of Ducks nearly as large as a Musco-
vy. 22 saw a Humpback whale close to the ship, had Duff
(dough) for dinner it is made of musty flom water and bluch
bounced in a bag and boiled till half done to be eaten with
the sour molasses

23 saw great quantity of Porcupines the will sometimes jump
ten ft out of the water 24 had chuse for breakfast which we
took in a tin cup and eat with a spoon could travel as
fast as ants killed a B-2 Hog this evening to make a pot-
pie of for tomorrow 26 caught some fish today 27 saw water
about 5 ft for dinner to day 28 hung my hammock in the
fore riggin ten or fifteen ft from the deck threw an india rubber
blanket over it now sleep well 29 the water is dreadful
could smell it 30 yds 30 opened a new cask of water which
is worse than ever hold my nose when I drink April 2
saw several sharks look like catfish but not so much head
had pilot fish with them 4 the capt has concluded to run to
Cocos Island for water 6 rain almost constantly now
7 baped an old hog 9 altered our course for San Francisco again
10 saw a Diamond fish tis shaped like a diamond with it head on
one corner tail opposite the other corners answering for fins it
was about 5 ft square 18 we have caught up with the old log
which we saw on the 17th 3 Cheers were given as we passed it
21 anchored about dusk within 1/2 mile of Cocos Island it
is a small uninhabited island 2 1/2 miles long 8 wide it rises
nearly perpendicular 8 or 900 ft high the trees vines grass &c are
so thick tis almost impossible to get through them tis always
raining on one part of the Island which forms the streams
where we get water is always a cloud hanging over it the
wind cannot drive it away but drives more to it great
quantity of wild Hogs and birds on the island birds so tame
can climb up the trees and catch them I could not get on
shore May 3 caught the old log again 3 times 3 Cheers were
given as we passed it now think we can beat it to San F

9 spoke ship Massachusetts from Calles to San Francisco
18 traded rifles 21 Mr Brownly from Wisconsin died with
consumption caught the Panama fever which brought
the consumption on faster 22 buried him 5 min after
no one seemed to think of him at all 23 now out of
beans, yams and rice had flapjacks (pancakes) for dinner
baked 1 1/2 in thick scarcely warm in the middle 27 about
as cold as November June 1 caught a gooney on a
species of duck it measured 6 ft from tip to tip caught it
with fishing hook and line 15 had our jib and flying jib
booms with their sails carried away 16 we are here right
in the gold I expect tis useless to write anything about the
gold you can believe every thing you hear tis impossible to
add any thing to it a man in diggin a foundation for a
house in San Francisco day or two ago took a pan of the earth
to the river and washed 4 dols out of it can pick it up in
the streets is over 80 ships laying at anchor in the Harbour
it nearly all the sailors desert one ship offers 1000 dols for sailors
to go to Boston all the sailors have left the ship we come in
dry goods and Hardware are nearly as cheap as in Belt can
buy an axe for 1.50 shovel for 2.00 potatoes, Onions and chuse 75^c
per pound flour from 4 to 8 dols per barrel can buy a shirt
cheaper than get one washed charge 1.00 a piece for washing
and 75^c for a shirt house and ground rents are high charge
100 dollar per day for ground to set a tent on a house in the
town which would cost 2 or 3000 dols at home rents for 100.000 dols
per year goods are laying all about the streets but you can
see all this in the papers the mail closes today or I would
like to write more I am well very well weigh 162 lbs

I have left our party and joined with Mr Cleaves from Maine
or Sholtington from N Carolina and A D Ing of Balt may not
start to the mines for a few days can get ¹²⁰~~100~~ dol for week in
the town for carpenters work a common labour gets from 7 to 10 dol
a day houses are going up in every direction wood is 30 dol a
cord in the Gambling Houses often see as much gold on the
table as a man can carry. I'm going to the mines tomorrow
Whether you must write to me by every steamer if I do not write often
it will not be my fault. I intend to write by every opportunity
my love to you all I would rather see you all now than all the
gold there is here but I will be home soon as soon as possible
your most affet son Dave

of the country has been quiet till last night (with the excep-
tion of the Indians and Oregon emigrants) a row was kicked up
between some Chillyians and Yankees the yankees run them off
beat a few pretty bad shot at a dozen or so threw their tents
baggage in the bay &c. one of the passengers in our ship went
on shore Sunday in coming aboard again his boat sawamped
and drowned him. we have arrived here just in good time the
streams have been so high could not dig much gold an old
Miner was down the other day said he knew of places where the
water got a little lower where he could find it in holes of Yelons
it may be so. it is a barren country here no trees but little scrubby
bushes 3 or 4 ft high near the bay a little back nothing but sand
have some pretty Horses and Cattle keep is good. I am in a great
Hurry put off writing till could learn something to tell you I have
no time to correct mistakes write do write write my dearest
Whether all of you must write to me every one of you

truly yours
Dave